

WASHINGTON LETTER.

[From our Regular Correspondent.]

WASHINGTON, April 18.

The Presidential question is becoming a very interesting one in the Senate, which contains a number of would-be dark horses of both parties. It has been long known that a majority of Republican Senators are opposed to the nomination of President Harrison by their party, and that a majority of the Democratic Senators are in the same state of mind concerning the nomination of Mr. Cleveland by the Democrats. Recent events have had a tendency to make it appear probable that Cleveland and Harrison would again head their party tickets, and the result has been a very marked activity among the Senators to devise ways and means of preventing this, and there are numerous hints being privately dropped of surprises in store for the public as to candidates on both sides, but the Senators are wary; they all wish to be solid with the men selected as candidates by their party, even if it be Cleveland and Harrison; consequently the greatest secrecy is being observed about their movements to defeat those gentlemen.

An amendment to the Naval Appropriation Bill was to-day introduced in the Senate by Mr. Daniel of Virginia, providing for an appropriation of \$300,000 for the expense of the international naval review in New York Harbor and Hampton Roads next April, and for entertaining such distinguished foreign guests as may accept the invitation of this Government to take part in the review.

The House is fast getting itself into trouble by not reforming or abolishing the rule which allows a member to print in the *Record* anything he pleases as a part of his speech, a speech that is never delivered at all, but is printed under the elastic "leave to print" rule. Already Henry George's book on the tariff has been printed entire, as well as a number of other pamphlets and books, and if something is not done to stop the flood some member may run in the Bible or *Tabbedition* Dictionary as part of his alleged speech. To ordinary folks this looks like tomfoolery.

The employees of the Government departments are in a state of mind that is far from being pleasant. It is expected that many discharges will have to be made on the 1st of July in all of the offices, on account of the curtailment of appropriations, and it is also expected that the record of "faithfulness and efficiency" which President Harrison has recommended all of the heads of the departments to keep, and which is being kept in most of them, will decide who shall go. This seemingly is a fair arrangement, but in reality it is just the reverse, as the system of records adopted makes the chief of each division an autocrat, who may at pleasure rate a clerk up or down, regardless of his or her merits. Verily, the life of a Government clerk, in spite of short hours and comparatively high pay, is not a happy one. So much "kicking" is being done that Secretary Foster has held several consultations with the heads of bureaus under him with a view of adopting a more satisfactory system.

All sorts of ideas are presented in one or another shape to Congress, but a position which has been made to the House Committee on Labor, for the solving of the labor problem, by W. M. Howard of Pennsylvania, is about the most unique yet presented. It is claimed that it has been fully or partially endorsed by Gladstone, Cardinal Gibbons, the late Secretary Windom, H. C. Baird, Samuel Gompers, President of the Federation of Labor; Governor Pattison, T. V. Powderly, and R. G. Ingersoll. It provides for the establishment of a unit of labor by Congress, just as a unit of measurement of land, a unit of weight for products, and a unit of value for money have been made. It proposes that the wage unit shall be sixty pounds of good flour, or its equivalent, and that all work shall be paid for in units. All that is asked of this Congress is an appropriation of \$5,000 for the publication of a circular setting forth in detail the plan. Representative Dungan of Ohio has been instructed by the Committee to investigate the subject and report thereon.

It is thought here that Commissioner Roosevelt was the moving spirit in getting the resolution providing for an investigation of the alleged violations of the civil-service laws by Federal officials in Baltimore last year introduced in the House, although it was ostensibly a Democratic move. The House Committee on Rules will, it is thought, give President Harrison a chance to tell why he did not take some action on the report when it was made by Mr. Roosevelt, charging these violations of law, before it reports the resolution authorizing an investigation by the House.

The Alliance Congressmen are much interested in the announcement that the Executive Committee of the Georgia State Alliance had ordered all sub-alliances which had joined the People's Party to revoke their action or forfeit their Alliance charters. Georgia is the State that they had been counting upon to lead the other Southern States into the People's Party.

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